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DATA ON HUNGARIAN LABOR TURNOVER

One of the big obstacles to Socialist progress is loose work discipline. This manifests itself in labor turnover, which constitutes a real danger.

In combating this threat, some results have already been accomplished, but the present situation is far from satisfactory. For example, with the progress of manpower recruitment, the rate of labor turnover has also increased. During April, labor turnover in the manufacturing industry was 115 percent and in the construction industry 182 percent higher than in March.

The Hungarian Factory and Small Dwellings Construction Enterprise at Bodajk has had 2,000 transient workers within 5 months. Of the 290 recruited workers of the Inota power plant project, 83 quit arbitrarily. Another mass desertion took place at Dunapentele, where 174 workers of the No 4 construction project left simultaneously. These are only the most outstanding examples.

The detrimental result of this turnover is that numerous enterprises are unable to create a permanent working force which is the prerequisite for constructive work. The turnover and shortage of skilled and unskilled workers are the plague of many important enterprises.

The disease of labor turnover, however, can be cured permanently. When leaders of the various enterprises are called to account, they use an almost routine pretext, shortage of manpower and large labor turnover. These very same whining leaders are to be blamed, for they are unable to keep their own house in order.

The principal causes of turnover are wrong and incomplete political indoctrination, bureaucratic, soulless treatment accorded to the workers, lack of concern for new employees, and brutal violation of the Socialist tenet, "Man is the highest value." Numerous enterprises have made no provisions for housing, feeding, and recreational activities of the new workers.

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Because of poor housing and treatment, 100 workers of the Miskolc Building Enterprise left the construction work at Hejoscscaba.

Conditions are deplorable at the Szabadszallas project of the National Housing Construction Enterprise, where the workers refused to eat the half-cooked, hogwash-like meals. Spoiled tomatoes and potatoes, and 3,000 spoiled eggs were found here. The employees, instead of denouncing those responsible for these conditions, simply deserted their work.

Regarding the labor turnover, the party organizations and unions who close their eyes and do not remedy this situation have a heavy burden of responsibility. Like the above-named enterprises, they also abandon the workers. Those who are satisfied with assigning the tasks for the workers but completely disregard practical indoctrination are bureaucrats. Human beings cannot be given soulless treatment. However, this is the case at construction works where unskilled country people are assigned to job without having been told of the norms and production requirements. The inexperienced workers are organized in special brigades, but there is no one to give them technical instructions. This attitude results in low wages and high turnover.

The Construction Enterprise at Zalaegerszeg is an exception. Here, the recruited workers are assigned to experienced brigades and receive technical training. There is no turnover problem here.

Grave mistakes are committed relative to the wage system. In many fields a piecework system has been introduced. Recently, the obsolete index wage system was abolished, affecting 100,000 workers. Although the wage system is becoming more and more Socialistic, mistakes occur which can be attributed to faulty, bureaucratic, and, not infrequently, hostile application. For example, the recruited workers left Sajobabony with bitter resentment because they had to fight for their pay constantly. Foreman Karoly Ferenczi denied them work cards, saying that it was not necessary, and that he would keep records of their production. As a consequence, the workers were cheated and did not receive their wages in full. Thus, Ferenczi lost 250 of his 300 workers.

Another example of the faulty wage system is the power plant at Inota. Here the workers, not being organized in brigades, were left to themselves and therefore earned less money. In the beginning, they were paid as low hourly wages as the girls who carried water.

At the Tukros unit of the Kopolnasnyek AGI, 7-10 workdays remained unaccounted for because of the negligence of the brigade leaders. Of the 125 recruited employees only 35 remained there.

These occurrences explain the labor turnover. Thus, the leaders of the economic life and functionaries of the unions are responsible for the nonfulfillment of the Five-Year Plan.

To eliminate the turnover, the new workers must be given better training. The task is to give practical and technical indoctrination, thus bringing the workers into the attractive communal life. The party organizations must take care of the new workers who need direction by agitation and enlightenment. The workers must feel that the party is behind them, ready to lead and to help them. Those who vacillate should be won over, and those who are easily discouraged should be taught how to make sacrifices.

The union functionaries are equally responsible for the soulless, bureaucratic treatment of the workers and for the lack of technical training resulting in labor turnover. They must organize the older, experienced employees so that these skilled workers can teach their inexperienced comrades. The

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unskilled workers must be drawn into work competitions. It is the duty of the unions to supervise the enterprises and ascertain what has been done for the workers. It is not enough to recruit the workers; they must be kept on their jobs, too. Labor turnover results in inestimable damage to the economy and is also illegal.

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